

# The Builder.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1852.



THE lawn of the Royal Dublin Society, facing Merriion-square, the site of the building for the proposed "Great Industrial Exhibition of 1853," is now full of activity. In one part sawyers are busily engaged in cutting timber for the work, and in the centre a large body of carpenters are framing the semi-circular ribs which are to form the roofs. A stone foundation has been put in, on which the whole will stand, and some of the iron columns are already cast. In our present number\* we give a view of the entrance-front of the intended building, facing Merriion-square, and a plan of the whole, which shows that the central hall will be 425 feet long and 100 feet wide, and that there will be two side halls 345 feet long, and the width of the last, inclusive of a compartment on each side of them, 25 feet wide, running their whole length. Over these compartments there are to be galleries, also running the whole length of the building. The ceiling of these will be formed into panels, and provide opportunities for decoration. Wrought-iron trellis girders will support the galleries. The height to the top of the semi-cylindrical roof of the central hall will be 104 feet, and to the top of the similarly formed roof covering the middle of each side hall, it will be 65 feet. We have given these and other particulars before, but as the description will be better understood in connection with the drawings, we venture to repeat them. Comparing the central hall with the transept of the London Exhibition Building in Hyde Park, it will be found to be 17 feet longer, 29 feet wider, and about 3 feet less in height. It will have, however, an entirely different effect (an effect of its own), because the whole of the roof will be boarded, with the exception of a certain width at the crown of the vault, throughout its whole length, where light will be admitted. The ends of the three principal roofs, it will be seen, are semi-hemispherical, and, externally, the roofs will be covered with waterproof cloth, which we suppose will show some colours. The principal entrances will be under verandahs in the front facing Merriion-square, and there will be accessible external galleries.

Nine of the ribs for the side halls have been completed. Each rib consists of ten thicknesses, ranging from 1 inch to 1½ inch, of laminae of irregular lengths, averaging 10 feet, the abutting joints so arranged that no two in the rib come opposite each other. These are secured together by inch and inch and three-quarter screws, according to the thickness of the board. The weight of the timber in each rib is about 28 cwt. and about 1,200 screws are used in its construction. Each of the larger ribs, having a span of 100 feet, will weigh, it is said, nearly six tons. The architect, as our readers know, is Mr. Benson, of Cork. Messrs. Young and Co. of Edinburgh, are casting the columns; and Mr. Turner, of the Hammermith Works, Dublin, has the contract for the girders.

The general plan of the Exhibition will be

\* See page 586.

similar, as far as practicable, to that adopted for the Exhibition of 1851. The four divisions,—Raw Materials, Machinery, Manufactures, and Fine-Arts,—will be formed into thirty classes, as was the case there; but in the class of Fine-Arts there will be this difference, that oil and water-colour paintings will be admitted; and we will here express a hope that our artists will lend their aid to render the Exhibition attractive;—they will, at all events, spread their reputation, if they do not benefit themselves pecuniarily, by doing so. We look upon this as a most healthful and promising movement for Ireland, and earnestly desire that it may be carried out successfully to the close. Mr. Rooney appears now to be the acting secretary, and is throwing himself into it with that earnestness and vigour which characterise his proceedings. Mr. John Deane is his coadjutor.

Some of our readers who were led, by the notices we recently gave of some of the extraordinary groups of ruins which are to be found in various parts of Ireland, to visit the country and judge for themselves, have since expressed the gratification they experienced. Strange as it may seem, those notices first made known the existence of these antiquities to many English readers. Of course, it will not be supposed that we mentioned all: we could, even from our own note-book, have doubled the list. We travelled fast and far, and wrote only of the more salient points. Many of these, indeed, were omitted. The Round Tower at Cloyne, for example, should not be passed by those who visit Cork. It is but a short journey from that city, including a delicious sail to what was Cove and is now Queen's Town—through what Moore calls "the noble sea avenue to Cork"—and a noble avenue indeed it is. In Cloyne Tower all the stones used are round on the face, beautifully worked, and are each fitted one into the other, with the smallest possible joints. It has a stone plinth, projecting 4½ inches all round. The doorway, the usual height from the ground, is 2 feet wide at the bottom and 1 foot 10 inches at the top. The windows are also narrower at the top than at the bottom, and some of them have the angular heads to which we have already referred. The conical roof remains, either ancient or restored, but a battlemented parapet has been added. This tower is used as a belfry, and the floors having been reinstated and made accessible by ladders, it affords a better opportunity for examination than is found in most of the towers. It was in the base of this tower that some human bones were found in 1841.

When standing close to the base of one of these remarkable monuments, the round towers, and looking up to its summit, the rapid passage of the clouds over it, if the wind be blowing, gives strikingly the impression that the tower is falling upon you: on more than one occasion this effect was so strongly produced upon us, that we felt prompted to "run for it."

Cloyne Cathedral, the principal part of which is apparently of the 13th century, has little to interest. The neat little sextoness will show you a monumental slab, and tell you it is the earliest thing in the church, the date being 1177! And if you point out to her that what is taken for a 1 is in truth a 5, made as we all know fives were once made, and that the date is 1577, the aforesaid sextoness will not believe

you, so do not try. Some amateur architect has been at work in the chancel, and has done wonders in it,—in the way of novelty! Such foliated windows, in deal, were never made before, and, we hope, never will be again.

Not far from Cloyne, at Castle Mary, there is a Cromlech, according to Mr. and Mrs. Hall,\* not unlike this at Shanganagh, county Dublin.



The pertinacity with which custodians stick to early dates is shown, too, at *Blarney Castle*,—famous Blarney, with its beautiful groves and its gardens,—where the old lady who abhors it reserves as a *bonae bouche* for the admiration of antiquarian visitors an Italian chimney-piece, put up perhaps 150 years ago, which she loudly declares, and honestly believes (and would fight for her belief too), is "a thousand years old."

When speaking of *Killarney*, which we did much too briefly, we ought to have mentioned the cathedral, which has been built here from the designs of Mr. A. W. Pugin: it is roofed in, but remains unfinished. It is a cross church, very lofty, and singularly grand in its proportions. The style is the Lancet. The circular columns which carry the clearstory of the nave are of a grey basaltic stone. The central piers to carry the spire (not yet built), are somewhat crushed. Externally the weather has caused the stone "to run" into stalactites. The edges of the mouldings at the doors, windows, buttresses, &c. are fringed with it in the most extraordinary manner. The new Lunatic Asylum here, which has been built for the county, under the direction of Sir Thomas Deane, is now finished. This, too, is Early Pointed in style, and is beautifully placed. With nothing adventitious, or introduced merely for the sake of ornament, the building is very picturesque and effective. It has cost about 30,000*l.* we understood, and will lodge 250 patients.

To begin with the proposed Exhibition Building, and end in a Lunatic Asylum, might be construed into a bad omen. We prefer to close, therefore, with a note of admiration for the successful efforts made by Henry Herbert, esq. to improve the condition of his tenantry in this neighbourhood. Clean, healthful cottages in smiling gardens show where his domains extend, and tend to prove the truth of the assertion, that good landlords make good tenants.

MR. A. W. PUGIN, ARCHITECT.—We hear, with great regret, that Mr. Pugin died on Tuesday morning last at Ramsgate.

\* "Ireland, Its Scenery and Character." Virtue and Co.